

The Duration of Miracles

TEXT: Heb. 2:1-4

INTRODUCTION:

- A. OUR TEXT TEACHES THAT GOD BORE WITNESS TO THE APOSTLE'S PREACHING WITH MIRACLES.
- B. THE PURPOSE OF MIRACLES WASN'T FLESHLY GRATIFICATION. IT WAS FOR THE CHURCH'S BENEFIT(**1 Cor. 12:4-7**).
- C. HOW LONG WERE MIRACLES TO LAST AND WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

I. WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

- A. NOT JUST SOMETHING WONDERFUL THAT WE DON'T UNDERSTAND.
 - 1. Not natural phenomena - Birth, life, healing.
 - 2. Not beating the odds - plane crashes, Dodgers, etc.
 - 3. Not the exercise of unusual talents, Autistic Savants.
- B. MIRACLE, *dunamis*, "power, inherent ability, is used of works of a supernatural origin & character, such as could not be produced by natural agents or means" (*Vine*).
"An event or action that apparently contradicts known scientific laws and is hence thought to be due to supernatural causes, esp. to an act of God" (*Webster*).

II. WHO IN THE CHURCH HAD THESE POWERS?

- A. THOSE WHO RECEIVED HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM.
 - 1. The apostles(**Acts 2:1-4**).
 - 2. Cornelius(**Acts 10:44-48**)before he was saved.
 - 3. Both cases a new teaching came to light(**11:13-18**).
- B. THEY UPON WHOM THE APOSTLES LAID HANDS(**8:14-19; 19:6**).
- C. NOT ALL HAD THESE POWERS(**1 Cor. 12:28-29; Acts 8:14-16**).

III. WAS THERE A TIME LIMIT? HOW LONG?

- A. **1 Cor. 13**. CONTEXT FIRST!
 - 1. The result of inspiration(**2:16**)
 - 2. **ch. 12**. A troubled church.
 - a. Competition between tongues and prophets.
 - b. Same Spirit, different gifts, to profit the church.
 - c. We must pursue greater gifts than these(**vs. 31**).
- B. 3 ARGUMENTS TO SHOW LOVE AS A MORE DESIRABLE GIFT.
 - 1. Love is more **basic**(**vs. 1-3**). It can stand without miracles.
Miracles can't stand without love.
 - 2. Love profoundly **effects our lives**(**vs. 4-7**).
They had miracles but none of the benefits named here.
 - 3. Love is greater because of **duration**(**vs. 8-13**).
 - a. Love never fails, but miracles do. When? When that which is perfect is come(contrast with partial knowledge)(**2 Tim. 3:16-17**).
 - b. **vs 11**. What are the childish things? **Context!**
 - c. **vs. 12**. Our vision unclear...need for confirmation.
Now: 1 Cor. one of the first. They saw in a mirror darkly, they knew in part.
Then: When that which is perfect is come(**2 Tim.3**), face to face, fully know
as we are known(**2:16**).
 - d. **vs. 13**. 3 greatest gifts - duration.

Faith DOESN'T LAST FOREVER, BUT OUTLASTS MIRACLES.

Hope DOESN'T EITHER(ROM. 8:24), YET...

Love LASTS FOREVER, THEREFORE IT IS THE GREATEST.

- C. **Zechariah 13.** THE CONTEXT TELLS US WHEN.
1. **ch. 12:10.** "They shall look unto me whom they have pierced"
 - a. **Rev. 1:7.** The right language but no fulfillment claim.
 - b. **John 19:37.** Fulfillment claimed, the death of Jesus.
 2. **ch. 13:1.** "A fountain opened...for sin and for uncleanness."
 - a. **Heb. 9:13-15; Rom. 3:23-26.** Only one fountain, for all on both sides of the cross.
 - b. "In that day" when they look unto him whom they have pierced.
 3. **ch. 13:7.** "The sheep shall be scattered."
(**Mat. 26:31**). Fulfilled "this night."
- D. **ch. 13:2-6.** THE END OF PROPHECY.
1. "In that day"(**vs. 2**). What day?
 2. The prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land (**vs. 2b**).
 3. The death penalty for the prophet(**vs. 3; Deut. 18:20-22**).
 4. Ashamed of his vision.
 5. The hairy mantle(**2 Kings 2:8-15**).
 6. **vs. 5.** Those who would be prophets will find other work.
- E. SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT **Zech. 13**:
1. In that day is used not to point out an hour on the clock, or a specific day. It is used to describe a time-frame. "In my day..."
 2. The time-frame is the period surrounding Jesus' death.
 3. After this those claiming to be prophets are called liars.
 4. Neither is there time or place for exorcists.

CONCLUSION: MIRACLES ARE NOT FOR TODAY.